

## CHAPTER 1

## InFocus

WPL\_AI801

# INTRODUCING ILLUSTRATOR CS6

**Adobe Illustrator CS6** is an illustration and drawing program, designed specifically for the creation and output of vector graphics. Illustrator is used widely in industries such as graphic design, web design, desktop publishing, illustration, in fact, wherever there is a need to create print-based and digital art.

Whether you're a graphic designer, illustrator, artist, desktop publisher, or just have a keen interest to learn, Illustrator CS6 offers many tools and features to help you to create professional-looking artwork and documents.

In this chapter you will take a tour of Illustrator CS6 so that you can become familiar with the Illustrator workspace. So, let's get started!

**In this session you will:**

- ✓ gain an understanding of vector graphics and bitmap images
- ✓ learn how to start **Illustrator**
- ✓ learn how to switch between the dark and light interfaces
- ✓ learn how to open an **Illustrator** document
- ✓ gain an understanding of the **Illustrator CS6** workspace
- ✓ gain an understanding of artboards
- ✓ gain an overview of the tools on the **Tools** panel
- ✓ learn how to work with the **Tools** panel
- ✓ learn how to display hidden tools
- ✓ gain an understanding of the panel dock, panels and panel groups
- ✓ learn how to display and hide panels and panel groups
- ✓ learn how to dock and undock panels
- ✓ learn how to move and resize panels
- ✓ learn how to select and save a workspace
- ✓ learn how to work with the tools and options on the **Control** panel
- ✓ learn how to navigate the canvas using the **Hand** tool
- ✓ learn how to use the **Navigator** panel
- ✓ learn how to adjust the magnification of a document
- ✓ learn how to use the **Zoom** tool
- ✓ learn how to view and change preferences
- ✓ learn how to close a document and exit **Illustrator CS6**.

# UNDERSTANDING VECTOR GRAPHICS

When you create artwork in Illustrator, you are creating vector art or graphics. Vector graphics are essentially geometric shapes based on mathematical equations. Shapes include lines,

curves and points. Unlike bitmap graphics, which are made up of pixels (squares of colour), vector graphics can be resized infinitely without loss of image quality.

## What Are Vector Graphics?

**Vector graphics** are shapes made up of **lines**, **curves** and **points** (called **anchor** points), to create artwork. Vector graphics are based on mathematical computations to determine their shape, dimension and position. For example, your art will be a certain size on the page (measured as **width** and **height**) and will be located at a specific position on a page (the **x** and **y** coordinates). Essentially, a vector graphic is a mathematical equation that makes up your image or artwork.

One distinct characteristic of vector graphics is that they can be scaled (resized) upwards infinitely without loss of image quality (see picture below). This makes vector graphics perfect for any artwork that needs to be resized. For example, you could create a company logo that is **3 cm x 3 cm** and scale that same art for use on a billboard.



## Vector Vs. Bitmap Graphics

**Bitmap graphics** (or **raster** graphics) are images made up of a rectangular grid of **pixels**. A pixel is a tiny square or dot of colour, mapped to a specific location on the image. A photograph is an example of a bitmap image. A single bitmap graphic could be made up of thousands (or millions!) of pixels.

Because bitmap graphics are based on pixels, they lose sharpness when scaled upwards. You may have heard the term 'pixelated'. This occurs when the image is scaled upwards so that you can actually see the pixels that make up the image. Pixelated images usually look a little blurry and distorted. Image clarity is compromised when increasing the size of bitmap images (see below).



*The original image (above) is sharp, while the scaled image (right) is quite pixelated and has lost clarity and detail.*



# STARTING ILLUSTRATOR

When you install Illustrator CS6, it will be added to the **All Programs** menu, under the heading **Adobe Illustrator CS6**. Once you have opened the application several times using this menu, the

**Illustrator** option will also appear at the top of the **Start** menu, providing an even quicker method for starting it. You can also open Illustrator by double-clicking on its desktop icon, if present.

## Try This Yourself:

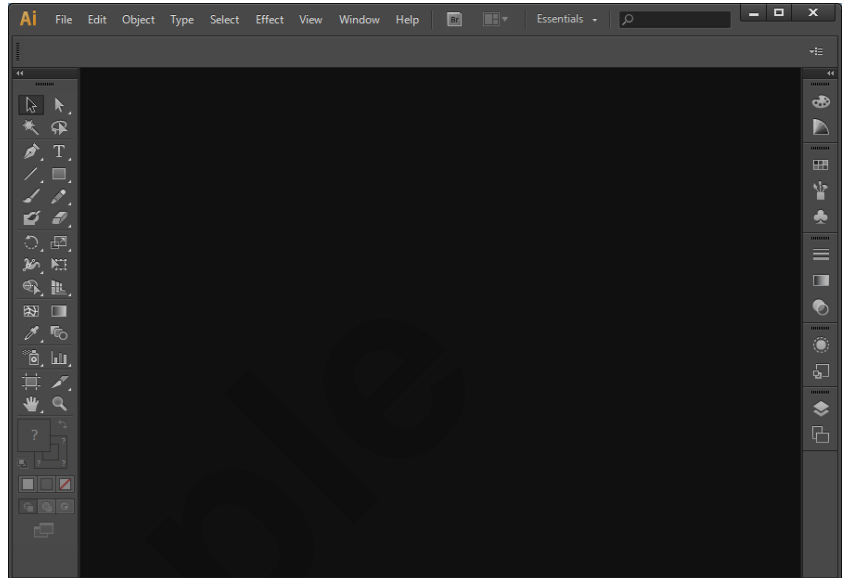
*Before starting this exercise ensure that your computer is switched on...*

- 1 Click on the Windows **Start** button, located in the bottom left corner of the screen, to display the **Start** menu, then select **All Programs** to display the submenu

*Illustrator may be installed independently to the rest of the Adobe Design Suite, in which case you will see the option Adobe Illustrator CS6 on the All Programs menu...*

- 2 Select **Adobe Illustrator CS6** to open the application and display a blank Illustrator window

*As you can see, the Illustrator CS6 interface has been set to a much darker shade than in previous versions. In the next exercise you will change this to a lighter shade*



*Note: If your computer is running the Windows 8 operating system, it may not have a Start button. In this case, you have several options for starting Illustrator from the Windows 8 Start screen.*

- You can begin typing **illustrator** and then click on Illustrator on the Results screen.
- You can right-click anywhere on the screen, click on **All apps** in the App bar at the bottom of the window, and then scroll to and click on the Illustrator tile.
- You can click on the Illustrator tile if you have pinned it to the Windows 8 Start screen.

## For Your Reference...

To **start Illustrator**:

1. Click on the Windows **[Start]** button
2. Select **All Programs > Adobe Illustrator CS6**

## Handy to Know...

- When you use a program frequently, its icon will appear in the **Start** menu's first level. To ensure that Illustrator's icon always appears at the top of the **Start** menu, you can pin it there by clicking on **Start**, then right-clicking on the **Illustrator** option and selecting **Pin to Start Menu**.

# DARK VERSUS LIGHT INTERFACE

A very obvious change to the new version of Adobe Illustrator is the **colour of the interface**. Adobe has chosen to apply a very dark shade of grey and black to the entire interface, making the

toolbars, menus and palettes appear recessed, effectively focussing your attention on the open document or image. It is however possible to reset the colour to a lighter shade like previous versions.

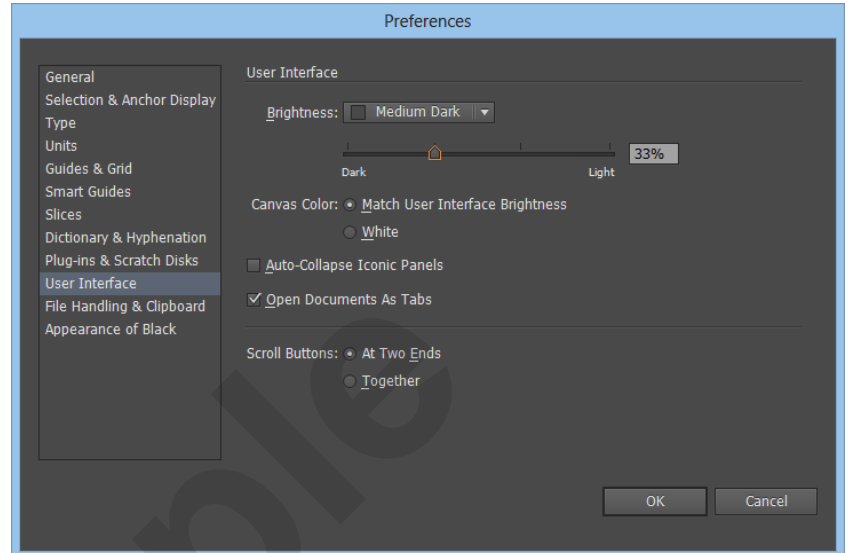
## Try This Yourself:

*Before starting this exercise ensure that Illustrator has started...*

*As the dark interface may not be as legible (particularly when printed) we will reset it to a lighter shade in this exercise for the rest of this manual...*

- 1 Select **Edit > Preferences > User Interface** to display the **User Interface** options of the **Preferences** dialog box
- 2 Click on the drop arrow for **Brightness** and select **Light**
- 3 Click on **[OK]** to apply the changes and reset the colour

*The text and icons are now displayed in black as opposed to white (when the colour scheme was dark grey)*



3

## For Your Reference...

To **switch** the **shade of the interface**:

1. Select **Edit > Preferences > User Interface**
2. Select an option in **Brightness**
3. Click on **[OK]**

## Handy to Know...

- You can also use the **Dark/Light** slider in the **Preferences** dialog box to customise the shade of grey you want to apply to the interface.
- If you prefer to work on a white canvas area select **White** in **Canvas colour**.

# OPENING AN ILLUSTRATOR DOCUMENT

To introduce you to Illustrator and the tools that you will be using throughout this course, you will first open an existing Illustrator document. Although you will typically open most Illustrator

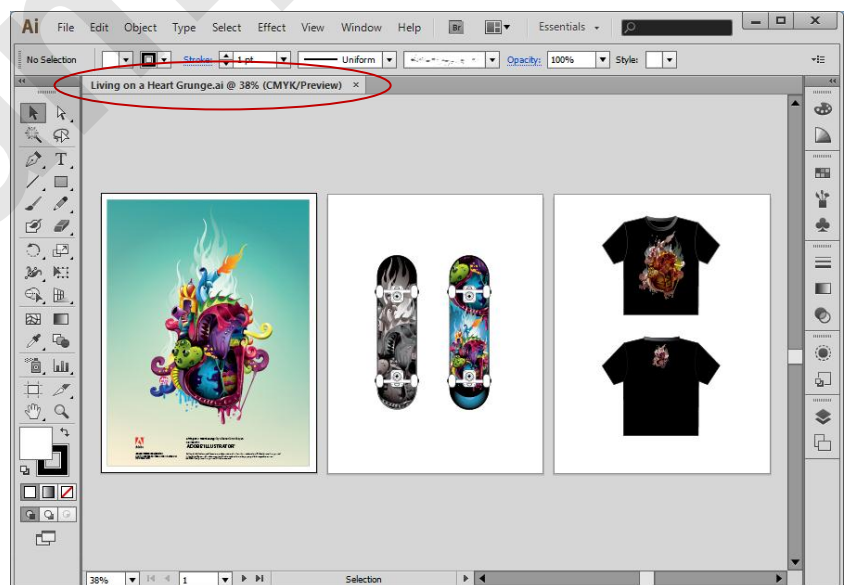
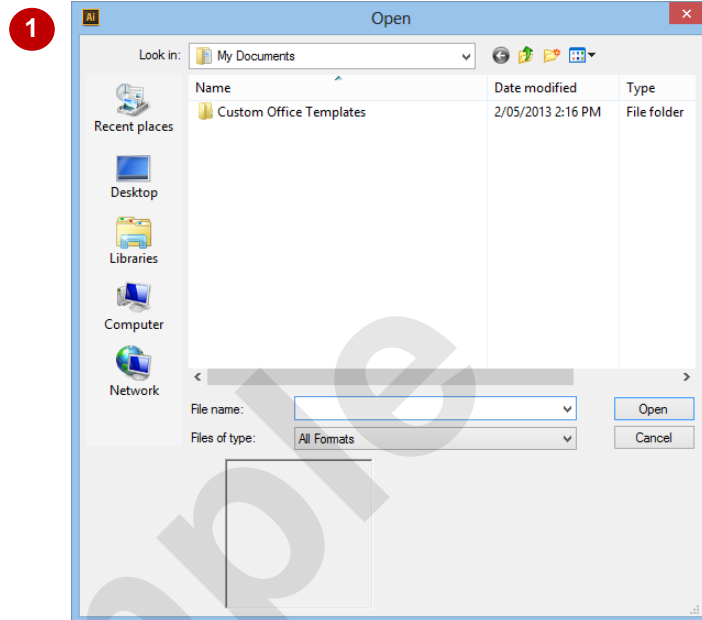
documents from within Illustrator, it is also possible to open documents from Windows Explorer or by double-clicking on a document icon on the desktop. Here we will just look at the first method.

## Try This Yourself:

*Before starting this exercise ensure that Illustrator has started...*

- 1 Select **File > Open** to display the **Open** dialog box
- 2 Navigate to the **Course Files for Illustrator CS6** folder then click on **Living on a Heart Grunge.ai** to select it  
*This is a sample file provided with Illustrator...*
- 3 Click on **[Open]** to open the file

*After a few moments the artwork will open in the Illustrator window; the file name is displayed in a tab at the top*



## For Your Reference...

To **open** an **Illustrator document**:

1. Select **File > Open**
2. Locate and click on the document to open
3. Click on **[Open]**

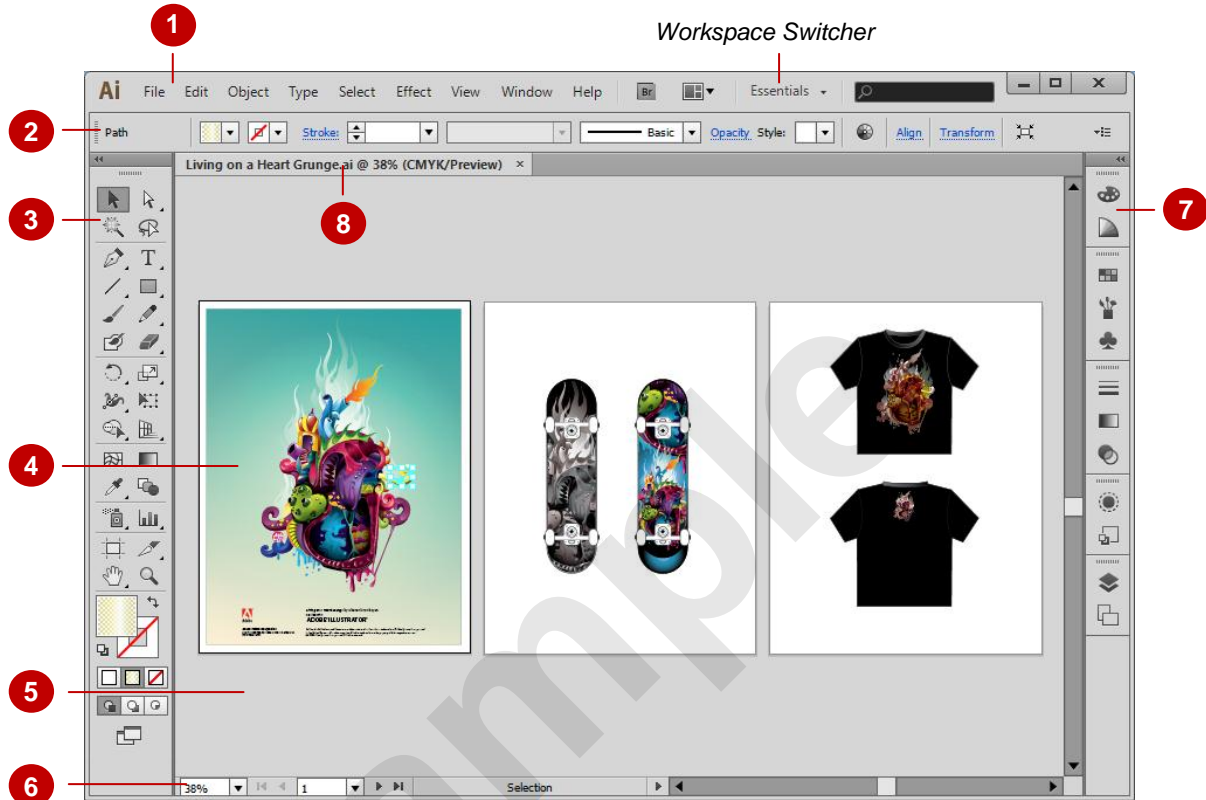
## Handy to Know...

- By default each document is opened as a tab. To switch between open documents, you click on the document's tab. To turn off the tabs and display each document individually, select **Edit > Preferences > User Interface** and click on **Open Documents As Tabs** until it appears without a tick.

# THE ILLUSTRATOR CS6 WORKSPACE

If you're familiar with using Adobe products, you will notice that the layout of the Illustrator window is similar to other Adobe programs. There are several elements in the Illustrator workspace that

you need to become familiar with so that you can use the program effectively. Below is a description of the Illustrator workspace and its various elements.



- 1 Application bar** Contains menus and options for arranging documents, and access to **Adobe Bridge** (Adobe's answer to image file management). Also contains the **Workspace Switcher**, a tool for selecting and customising a workspace to suit your design needs.
- 2 Control panel** Displays options and tools for the currently selected object. So, if you have a path selected, (as shown) the **Control** panel will display a range of tools relevant to working with that path.
- 3 Tools panel** Contains many of the tools you will need to create your art and apply effects, such as drawing shapes or freehand drawing. You will learn more about these as you complete this course.
- 4 Artboards** Represent the areas of the canvas that contain printable regions, that is, your finished art. You can set up as many artboards in a document as you need. You will learn more about artboards as you complete this course.
- 5 Canvas** This is the area of the document surrounding the artboard(s). Art can be created on the canvas until you're ready to place it on your artboard. The canvas that you see is part of the **document window**.
- 6 Status bar** Displays information about the status of the current document, such as the current magnification (zoom) and which page (artboard) you are currently viewing (is active).
- 7 Panel dock** Panels contain tools for editing objects and object **attributes**. For example, the **Gradient** panel contains options for applying and editing gradients. The panel dock contains a number of default panels and panel groups (defined by the **Workspace Switcher**), but you can add or remove panels via the **Window** menu.
- 8 Document tabs** Each tab represents an open document and displays the name of the document (there is only one document open in the picture above). Click on a tab to display that document.

# UNDERSTANDING ARTBOARDS

**Artboards** in Illustrator represent the areas of the document that contain your artwork and what will be printed. You can create as many artboards as you need in a document (up to 100) for whatever

you are working on. For example, if you are designing a letterhead and business card for a client, you might create two artboards – one for the letterhead and one for the business card.



**1 Canvas**

This area is not printed. You can use the canvas to place and edit objects until you are ready to include them in your artwork.

**2 Non-printable area**

The area between the printable area and the edge of the page that will not be printed. The printable and non-printable areas of your document will be determined by your printer and printer settings.

**3 Bleed edge (red)**

**Bleed** is the artwork that extends outside the printable area or document/artboard edge. Bleed is often included as a margin of error: to ensure that the ink will still print to the edge of the page even after trimming.

**4 Artboard border (black/grey)**

Represents the entire area that contains printable artwork and defines the trim size (the non-printable area is only defined by your printer; professional printers can print to the edge of the page). You define the size of the artboard(s) during document setup.

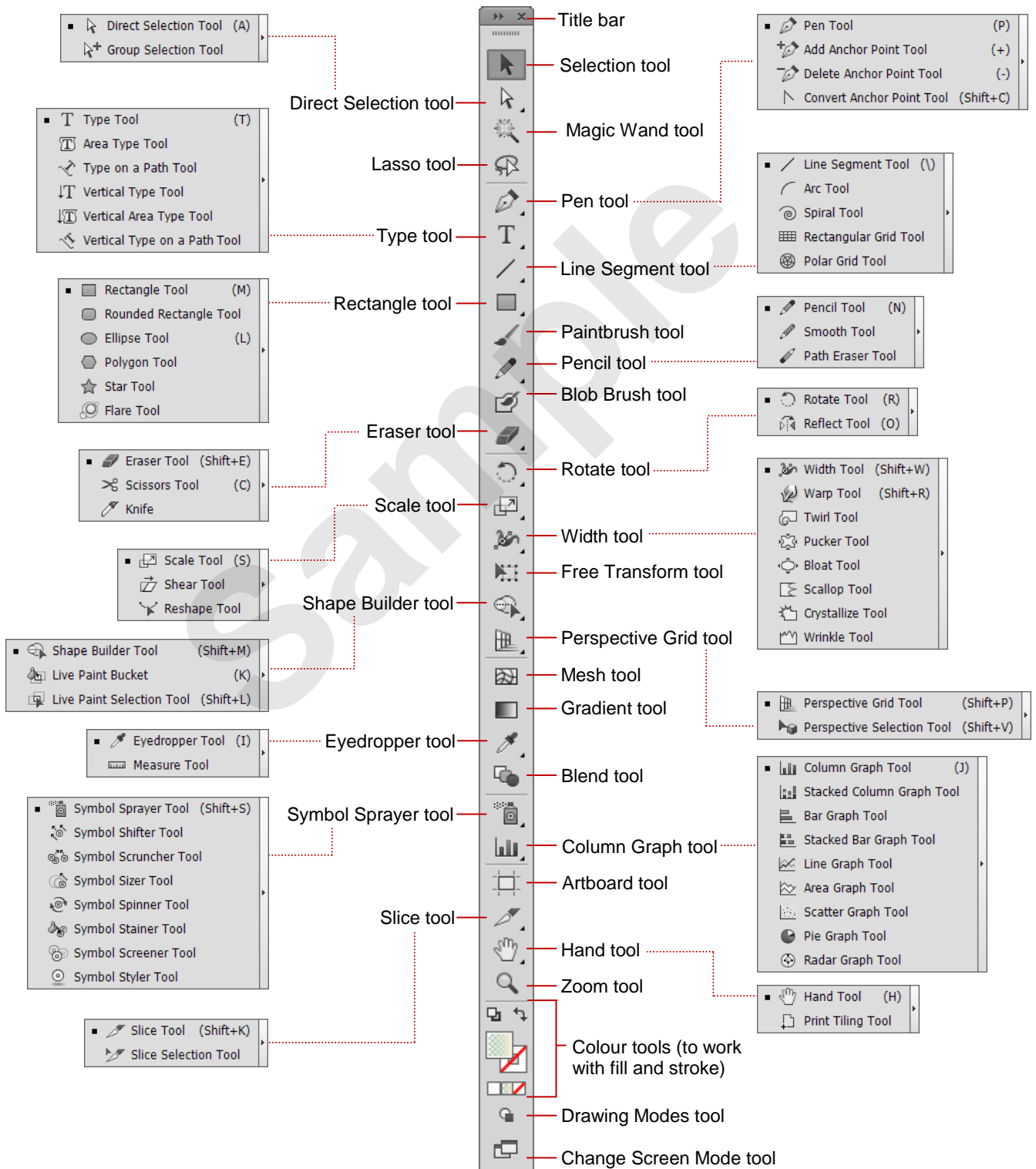
**5 Printable area**

Contains the printable area of your artwork (this takes into account that most printers cannot print to the edge of the page). Any artwork that falls within this area will be printed on your printer.

# THE TOOLS PANEL

The **Tools** panel contains many of the tools you will need to create and edit objects and art, such as tools for selecting, drawing, painting, editing and navigating to name just a few! Tools with a

black arrow contain additional tools. These are displayed when you click and hold the left mouse button on the tool. Here is an overview of the tools on the **Tools** panel.



# WORKING WITH THE TOOLS PANEL

The **Tools** panel contains many of the tools you will need to create art and to work with objects. The **Tools** panel, as with any panel in Illustrator, can be moved and resized to suit your needs. It

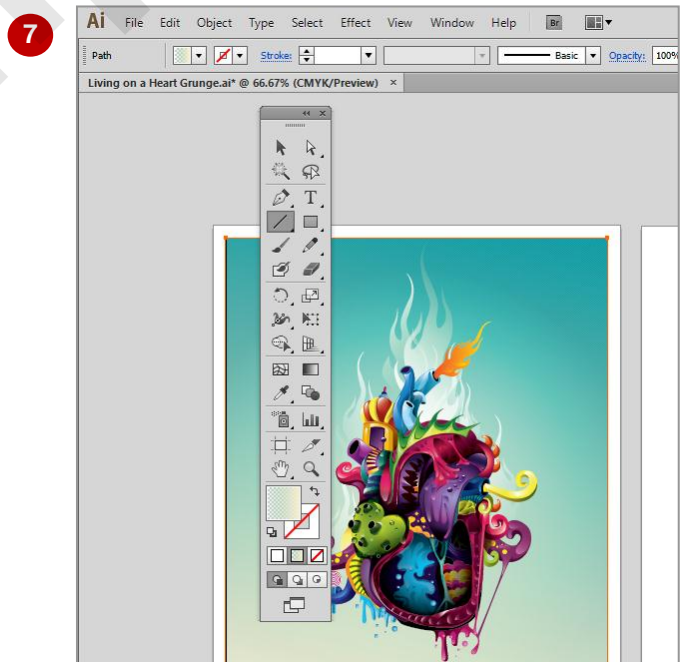
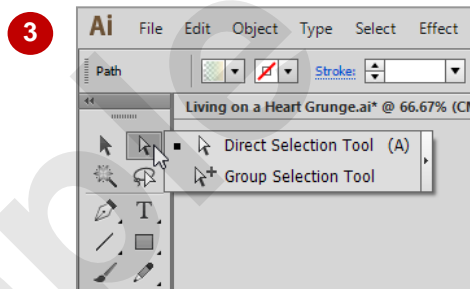
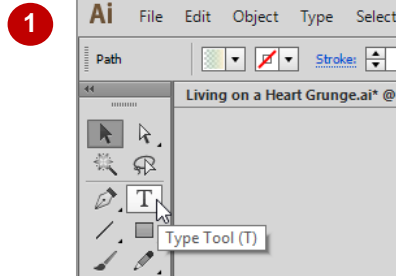
can also be **docked** and **undocked**. Docked panels are positioned along the sides of the screen, while undocked panels can sit anywhere on the screen.

## Try This Yourself:

**Same File**

Continue using the previous file with this exercise...

- 1 Hover over each tool on the **Tools** panel to display a **tool tip** showing the name of the tool and its shortcut key(s)
- 2 Click on the **Pen** tool in the **Tools** panel or press **P** to make the tool active
- 3 Click and hold the left mouse button on the **Direct Selection** tool to reveal a menu of additional tools
- 4 Repeat step 3 for the **Line Segment** tool
- 5 If the tools appear in two columns, click on the double arrow in the **Tools** panel title bar to view the tools in a single column
- 6 Click on the double arrow again to view the **Tools** panel in two columns
- 7 Click and hold the left mouse button on the **Tools** panel title bar then drag to the centre of the screen and release the mouse button  
*This panel is now undocked (floating), that is, sits wherever you like...*
- 8 Click and hold the left mouse button on the **Tools** panel title bar and drag it to the very left of the screen; when you see a blue line appear along the left side of the screen, release the mouse button to restore the panel to its original position



## For Your Reference...

To **display** the **Tools panel** in one or two columns:

1. Click on the double arrow on the **title** bar of the **Tools** panel

## Handy to Know...

- Many of the tools on the **Tools** panel can be activated by pressing the relevant keyboard shortcut key. This is displayed when you hover over the tool to display the **Tool Tip**. The letter that appears after the tool name is the shortcut key that you can press to activate the tool.

# DISPLAYING HIDDEN TOOLS

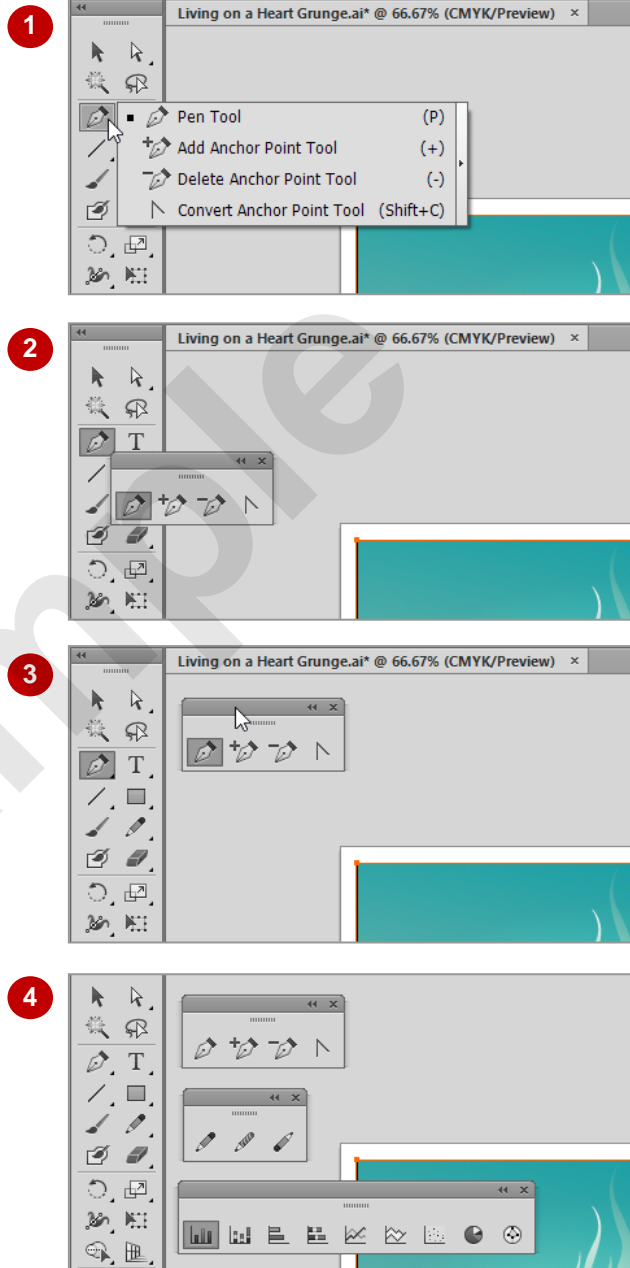
The **Tools** panel contains many tools. But what you see is just the start really. Some of the tools in the **Tools** panel contain a black arrow in the bottom right corner. This means that you can

expand the tool to reveal more, related tools. You can also display the hidden tools on a mini toolbar. Perfect for when you need to access the same tools repeatedly.

## Try This Yourself:

*Continue using the previous file with this exercise...*

- 1 Click and briefly hold the left mouse button on the **Pen** tool to reveal a menu of hidden tools
- 2 Click on the arrow bar on the right edge of the hidden tools menu to float the **Pen** toolbar
- 3 Click and drag the title bar of the **Pen** toolbar towards the top of the document window, as shown, then release the mouse button to reposition it
- 4 Repeat steps 1 to 3 to display the **Pencil** and **Column Graph** toolbars and position them below the **Pen** toolbar, as shown
- 5 Click on **close** on each toolbar to hide them again



## For Your Reference...

To **display hidden tools** in the **Tools panel**:

1. Click and hold down the left mouse button on the tool that appears with a black arrow
2. Click on the arrow bar to float the toolbar

## Handy to Know...

- New to Illustrator CS6 is the ability to dock the hidden toolbars alongside the **Tools** panel. Click and drag by the title bar to the left, until a blue line appears, then release.
- To turn **Tool tips** off and on, select **Edit > Preferences > General**, then select or deselect **Show Tool Tips** and on [OK].

# UNDERSTANDING PANELS

Much of the work you do in Illustrator will involve accessing panels and using panel options to edit your art and to work with objects. The most commonly-used panels are accessed via the

**panel dock** along the right side of the document window. However, you can also add and remove panels as required. All panels can be displayed by selecting the panel from the **Window** menu.

## The Panel Dock

The **panel dock**, located by default along the right edge of the window, contains some of the most commonly used **panels** and **panel groups**. A panel group is a group of like panels that appear together. For example, if you open the **Swatches** panel (shown below) you will see three **panel tabs** on the **tab bar**: **Swatches**, **Brushes** and **Symbols**, which match the panels in the panel group.

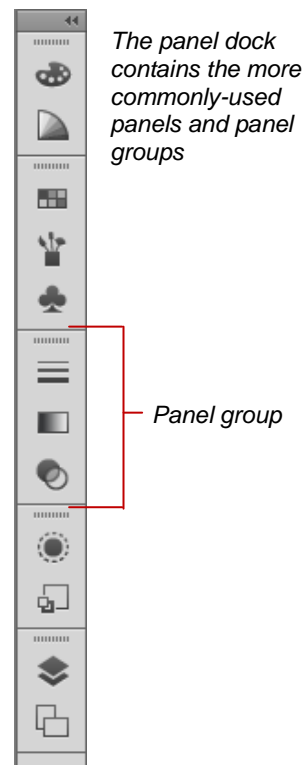
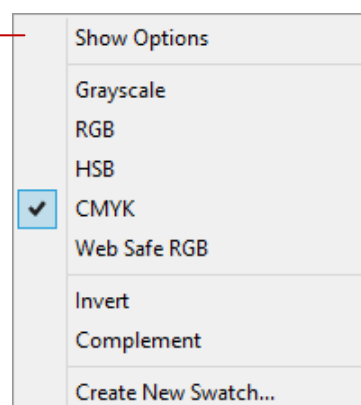
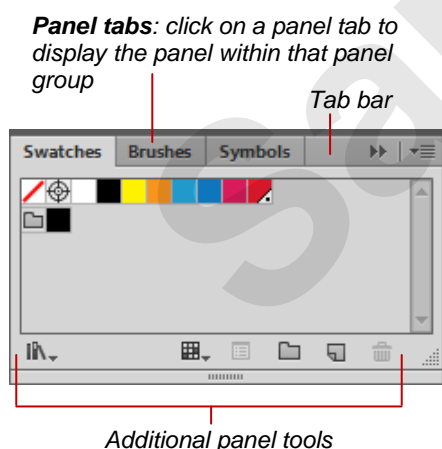
## The Window Menu

If you need to use a panel that is not sitting in the **panel dock**, you can access it from the **Window** menu. When you select a panel from the **Window** menu, the panel will appear undocked (or 'floating') in your document window.

## The Anatomy Of A Panel

Each panel contains a range of options for editing your artwork in some way. For example, the **Stroke** panel contains options for modifying and working with strokes (outlines).

While the appearance of each panel differs depending on the options available, there are some common elements (shown below) that you need to be aware of so you can work with panels and panel options effectively.



# DISPLAYING AND HIDING PANELS

The **panel dock** sits along the right side of the screen, and contains a number of panels and panel groups for commonly used editing tools. A **panel group** consists of two or more related

panels. Each panel on the panel dock is grouped with other panels. Panel groups are separated by a black line. You can display and hide panels via the panel dock or the **Window** menu.

## Try This Yourself:

*Continue using the previous file with this exercise...*

- 1 Click on **Colour** in the panel dock

*The Colour panel will be displayed (expanded)...*

- 2 Click on the **Colour Guide** tab of the **Colour** panel

*The Colour Guide is another panel that is part of this panel group. Notice that Colour Guide in the panel dock will also be selected...*

- 3 Click on the double arrow on the title bar of the **Colour Guide** panel to collapse (hide) the panel

- 4 Select **Window > Navigator** to display the **Navigator** panel

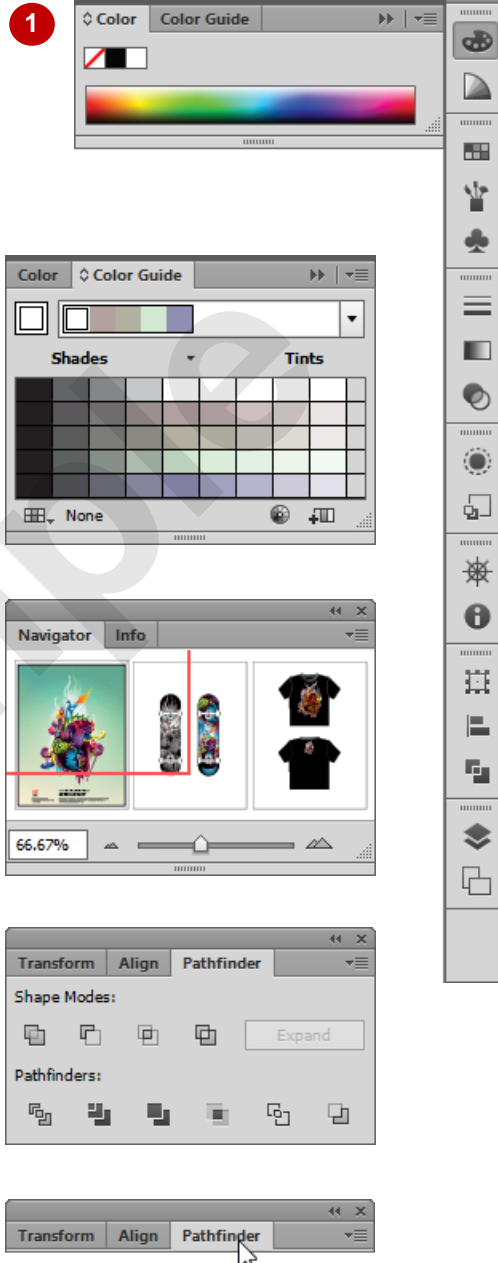
*The Navigator panel will be expanded from the panel dock...*

- 5 Double-click on the tab bar of the **Navigator** panel to float it

- 6 Repeat steps 4 and 5 to float the **Pathfinder** panel

*Panels will stay open until you close or hide them...*

- 7 Double-click on the **tab** of the **Pathfinder** panel (as shown) to reduce the size of the panel



## For Your Reference...

To **display** a **panel**:

1. Click on the panel in the panel dock OR  
Select **Window > panel name**

To **hide** a **panel**:

1. Click on the double arrow in the title bar of the panel or click on **close** (if floating)

## Handy to Know...

- Press **Tab** to display/hide all panels, including the **Tools** and **Control** panels.
- To hide or display the panel dock and all other open panels (but not the **Tools** and **Control** panels), press **Shift + Tab**.